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WASHINGTON - The Iranian government's plans to put seven Baha'i leaders on trial for spying and acting against the nation's security has been denounced by the **U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom**.

"We are extremely concerned about the fate of the seven Baha'is, who could face the death penalty for several of the charges leveled against them [Tuesday] in court," said Leonard Leo, the commission's chairman. "It appears that the Iranian government already predetermined the outcome and is once again using its courts as an instrument of religious persecution in blatant violation of international human rights laws."